

Re. I don't think that secrecy had to be complete. Secrecy was for the Germans essentially a quantitative problem. That's very difficult to imagine nowadays, because one thinks of secrecy as something that keeps a bit of information from other people, and if that is not being accomplished, then such a matter was supposedly no longer a secret. However, in this case we must remember ...

Cam. Coupe!

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Qu. With the exception of Dr. Benjamin Marmelstein, who was the last Chairman of the Theresienstadt ghetto, and the case of Theresienstadt was a very particular one, with the exception of Lejb Garfunkel, who was the deputy of Dr. Elkes, Chairman of the Judenrat of Kovno, all the leaders of the big ghettos, I mean all the Chairmen of the big ghettos of Poland and the Baltic area, or, to use another word, all the big leaders of these ghettos, they don't exist any more. They are all dead, most of them were killed by the Germans, Czerniakow, who was the leader, the Chairman of the Warsaw ghetto, committed suicide the 22nd of July 1942, and these people left behind them nothing which permits to see how they experienced... how they experienced the leadership. We have of course speeches of people like Rumkowski, in Lodz, like Gens, in Vilna, like Moses Merin, who was the chairman of all the ghettos of Upper Silesia and who stayed in Sosnowice, but no one left a diary as Czerniakow did. Well, we have now this diary, and you wrote... you published it, and you wrote an introduction for it. Well, first of all, how could you characterize the diary of Czerniakow?

Re. It is certainly the most unique and I would say the most important document coming from the Jewish side about the Holocaust, because it was written by a man who (began keeping a diary the very first week of the war, before the Germans entered Warsaw (and before he took over the responsibility of leading the Jewish community, and ~~he~~ kept ^{it} (his diary) in daily entries till the afternoon of the day when he ended his life.) And it is an important document, because Czerniakow occupied a post at the interface between the German and Jewish communities, in daily contact with both, receiving the requests of appeals and entreaties ^{from} ~~at~~ the Jewish population, and in turn appealing to the Germans. Every week several times. And it is a unique document, because a man, holding that position, set down in very matter of fact language, without embellishment, in an almost laconic style, everything that was transpiring, every meeting he had, every subject that was discussed in that meetings. Thus the diary is full of names, incidents and occurrences of various kinds and covers the ^{when it comes to} subjects - food, space, labour, hostages, children, shootings, ^{deaths} deportations, ghettoization. In general, ~~if~~ ^{of} all ~~of~~ it is there. There is simply nothing that compares in sheer content and coverage what this diary contains. But ~~it~~ is above all remarkable because farther away we are from the event itself, it seems that the diary transcends the man, it seems that keeping the diary under the circumstances was one of the most important things he did. For he left us a window, through which we can observe a Jewish community the terminal hours of its life.

Qu. A dying community?

Re. Certainly a dying community, what began dying from the begin

ON [And, in that sense, Adam Czerniakow did something very important.] He didn't save the Jews, in that respect he was like other Jewish leaders, but he left a record of what had happened to them, in a day by day fashion. And you could see that he did all this on top of working a seven days week. We he was a man without vacations, without any day off. And yet every day, or almost every day, he had an entry. He might record the weather, where he went in the morning, and then all the things that happened. But he never failed to write. That was something that moved him, pushed him, compelled him, throughout the years, almost three years of his life, under the Germans. And in that sense, perhaps because he wrote in such a prosaic style, we now know what went on in his mind, how things were perceived, recognized, reacted to. We even know from what he didn't say, just what is is that .. watch to the community.]

Qu. Yes, I think that what is remarkable in the diary when one looks at the diary day after day is first of all that this man is extremely busy. He has no time at all, and he wastes in one way his time in ~~many~~ daily routine tasks, in never ending.. neverending meetings with the Jews.. the other Jews of the Jewish Council, of which he is the chairman, with Germans who are above him and giving him orders, but the most remarkable thing is that he seems to have no illusion at all. There is not the slightest grandiloquence, he never overdoes the things.

Re. Two.. two illusions he does not have: he does not think of

himself ..

Qu. .. as a great man..

Re. .. as a great man. Now, when he becomes mayor, a title to him by the Germans, he compares himself to the king of Croatia.

Qu. A puppet?

Re. Not even a puppet, since Croatia turned out not to have a king really. When he visits an insane asylum, somebody accuses him and wants to talk to the chairman and he backs away saying he, Czerniakow, is not a chairman.

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Q. Yes, what is remarkable in this diary of Adam Czerniakow, is, I say he seems to have no illusions at all, but he has not only no illusions, but maybe he has no illusions because he has no plan, he has no policy, or he has no plan and he has no policy because he has no illusions. If one compares him to the other leaders of the great ghettos, like Rumkowski in Lodz, like Gens in Vilna, like Merin in Sosnowie--.. Sosnowice, all the three have a policy. I mean, they wanted at least to achieve something, they thought that the work would be the way of rescuing ~~xxxxxx~~ the Jews, and in all their speeches, they explain that the rescue through work is the only way, that there is no other one, they deliver Jews to the Germans for deportation, for the extermination centers and the question whether they knew of, or if they didn't, this is another question, and we will talk about this. But they took the risk, and they took the responsibility.

They very often said, yes, we have bloody hands, but we do this in order to save the bit of the community which can be saved. There is nothing of this kind in the diary of Czerniakow, and the remarkable fact is that the day he has to do the same things as the three others did, Gens, Rumkowski and Merin, he refused to do it. And he commits suicide.

Re. Yes, I think that he was not given to illusions. He is alleged by one person who survived, and who had actually left Warsaw time, but who was there at the beginning, to have called the initial council together and to have shown them a little bottle, containing 24 tablets of cyanide, which he said to them was going to be kept in his drawer. There was one for each of them when the time came.

Qu. For the 24 members?

Re. For the 24 members. This is a story. I cannot confirm it, do not know whether it is true. But it is a story which was told by somebody who says that it occurred in front of his eyes. And there is no question of the fact, that when the time came, one of those pills at least was consumed by Czerniakow himself. And in between these two events, which are almost three years apart, there are constant references to the end. He talks in terms of Greek mythology, for he was familiar with the mythology as so very many of the learned people of those days were. And he refers to himself as wearing a poisoned cloak, as Herkules once did. And he.. he also speaks of the coming events, the end. He is never surprised. He knows, ⁱⁿ that the very first week, when he takes over the community, or tries to take it over (that the Germans were coming.) And he prints up cards, in which he is.. just visiting cards, you know, in which he lists himself as

Obmann, and he prints these cards event while Poland is still fighting ~~the~~ German.

Qu. That's chairman?

Re. That's a chairman. He knows that the ghetto is coming. He knows it because he knows about the wall building. And it comes and is no surprise to him.

Qu. He is never revolted?

Re. He does not bother. Or he does not express the revolt, he does not express the disgust except with other Jews. Jews who either deserted the community by emigrating early, or Jews, who like Ganzweich are collaborating ~~+~~ with the Germans. And ^{ON} for the Germans he does not have words of disgust, I think ^{ON} he is beyond such words. He hasn't any criticism of the Germans themselves.

[And only seldom he allows himself to make a remark, which indicates that he opposed ~~+~~ something by arguing.] He very seldom argues with the Germans. [He pleads, he appeals, but he does not argue with them.] ^{OO} He does argue when he is forced not only to build the wall, but to pay ~~+~~ for it. And he says, that if the wall is being put up as a hygienic measure, to prevent Jewish epidemics from engulfing the Polish or German population outside, then why is it, why is it that the Jews have to pay for ~~it~~ it? The people who get the protection should pay for the medecine, if the wall is medecine, let the Germans pay. And Auerswald, the Ghettokommissar, says, that's a very nice argument, he, Czerniakow, might bring it up at an international conference some day, but for now you pay for the wall. Czerniakow writes all this down, inclu-

ding Auerswald's reply to his own argument. And that's about the most he ever allows himself to say in criticism of what the Germans were doing. So he takes for granted, he assumes, he anticipates everything that is happening to the Jews, including the worst.

Qu. Yes. But this is.. One could ask, why did he take the Job? And why did he keep the job?

Re. It's harder to figure out why he took it than to say why he kept it. He took it at a moment when the then existent chairman of the Jewish community, Meisel, had fled. I think he did have a sense of responsibility. He did not have great, major successes in his life: before September 1939, he was second in command of the Jewish community in Warsaw, he led the Jewish artisans, he had a job with a foreign trade house. But he was 59 years old, and his career had not been meteoric. He had failed to be elected to the Polish senate. He was not amongst the most prominent luminaries of the Polish community, of the Polish Jewish community. He had only one virtue which he assigned to himself: loyalty and steadfastness.

Qu. Yes. But do you think, for instance, it is obvious that a man like Rumkowski always had a lust for power, or even a craving for power. A man like Marmelstein too, and he had admitted it in front of me. And they.. it's very.. it's a real question, how did these people could receive their power from the actual killing of the Jewish people? But it doesn't seem that Czerniakow had the same..

Re. Not for power. He had not lust for it, he had no enjoyment in it. He suffered. He mentions the suffering. He had physical mal-

and he had maladies ~~which~~ of a kind which are associated with bureaucratic life. He.. he had criticisms for those who wouldn't let him do his job. He didn't enjoy the job. He suffered. He mentions that. He is asked by associates, how can he even stand it. And he says: "Well - I haven't had a pleasant childhood. I have learned early how to suffer." This is his answer. So, obviously, clearly he does it as a matter of duty. And there are remarkable passages in the diary that illustrate precisely what he meant. I can give you two examples, which are very striking. Mind you, everything in the diary is out of context. He doesn't write in paragraphs, he does not have introductions he doesn't have a theme, he doesn't have a thesis or .. or an objective. But here are two episodes that are one year apart. There is a Lady somewhere in Warsaw in love with a man. And the man was hit, was somehow grievously wounded, as a result of which he was left there in the streets with his insides coming out. This woman stuffed the insides back with her own hands. She carried the man to a first aid station, he died. He was buried in a mass grave, she disinterred him and buried him. This to Czerniakow, this simple episode, was the ultimate of virtue.

Qu. For whom?

Re. For him.

Qu. He writes it?

Re. He writes it.. Quite out of context. But he remembers it and it impresses him and he writes it. And here is the second example. And ironically, the second ~~example~~ episode duplicates the first. There is a discussion in the Jewish council, and somebody say

who are the true mentors of the people? And Czerniakow became very angry and said: "Well, certainly not those who emigrate in time! The true mentors are right here." And then he goes to tell a story, without even introducing it, without tying up with the discussion. As you know, in Warsaw, there were post offices, and the ghetto had one such post office. The delivery of all mail and parcels was carried on by Jews, not by the regular post office employees. And once, a 15 year old was substituting for his mail carrying father with very vital parcels. As you know, parcels kept people alive. And while he was making his round, some guard was shooting, as happened very frequently, and this boy was again hit in the stomach. He collapsed.

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Re. He was shot, and he collapsed. And with intestines coming out of his ^{abdomen} ~~abdomen~~ and his spinal cord, that was apparently severed, he crawled to the nearest house and asked there the border police man to deliver the packages that he was carrying. Czerniakow says no more. For him that story tells all. The boy was 15.

Qu. This means what - that the boy fulfilled the mission?

Re. He fulfilled the mission passed the instance he was already hit, but he was going to make sure that those parcels which he was carrying would reach the people for whom they were intended. And that was a mentor, that was a loyal person. That was an individual who did not forget his task, who did not desert his people as so many of those whom Czerniakow knew well at, perhaps, late in 1939, early 1940, perhaps even later. So Czerniakow had as

single virtue this sense of law.

Qu. You think that he despised the people who left?

Re. Absolutely, because he constantly refers to those who had emigrated in a tone of writing of voice which clearly indicates that he certainly despised them.

Qu. For instance, Zygelboim..

Re. No.. all of them. All those who emigrated and all those who left the community in the ^{beson}urge. He did not believe that somebody was emigrating for the purpose of helping, and he especially had harsh words to say for those were going to emigrate in order to collect funds or to help the Jewish community from the outside. He didn't believe that that would be done, could be done, or that that could even have been the intention of those who were leaving.

Qu. In spite of the fact that he knew^{that he was..I don't like}/. I don't like to use this word in what concerns the.. the Jewish Councils, and their leaders. In spite of.. but I have .. I have to tell it. In spite of the fact that he knew that he was obliged to fulfill the German orders, this means to collaborate in one way with them, he thought that it was better to stay, even at this price, than to.. to run than to escape?

Re. You see, running was possible only for a very small handful of people. The bulk of the Jews would remain behind leaderless. The constant dilemma of every Jewish council, particularly of Czerniakow as the head of the largest of them was that one could not stay at once post without serving the Germans. And one could not leave the post without apparently hurting the Jews. This was a paradox and a contradiction with which they all had to live

It was impossible to separate the two elements of each other.

It was a fatal combination, and it killed him.

Qu. Yes. And I think one has to keep absolutely these two ends of the.. of the rope in order to understand what was real problem^{of}atic ~~with~~ the Jewish Councils, the tragedy. What do you think of the people ~~xxxx~~ who have definite that on the.. the Jewish Council? They say they were collaborators!

Re. Well....

Qu. There are many!

Re. All sorts of people say all sorts of things. They have done it without much study. They have done it without deep penetration into the problem areas that these very people had. I think it's necessary to go a place, I think it's necessary to put oneself to some extent into somebody else's place. Invariably, inevitably I did this, ~~it~~ living five years with this diary and beginning to think somewhat the thoughts which Czerniakow had. In that sense of course, one enters into the mind of the person and begins to see the parameters, the limits, much as they were seen then. There was no such thing as collaboration as such in the Jewish community, because there is no Jewish leader, who even in the remotest identified with or wanted to help the German cores.

Qu. Noone?

Re. Noone that I know.

Qu. I mean, can it be compared with what one called .. you have the French collaborators, you have the Quislings..

Re. No, no, It cannot.. no, no, not.. There are some who come very close. One might think of Szewinsky, the Jewish police chief.

Qu. In the Warsaw, ghetto, yeah.

Re. There are some people who come very close to that like.. he was a convert to Christianity and he behaved in an abominable fashion during the deportations. But all such exceptions aside and there are not many, and even they are in a.. in a rather ambiguous aim, it must be said of the Jewish Councils that they were authentically Jews. The Germans did not really select. The Germans did not pick Jewish leaders. That must be remembered. The Germans simply aparted those who happened to be on hand. This includes Czerniakow and this includes a great many other. And so while it may be said that the Jewish Councils were not necessarily representative of the Jewish people, certainly they were middle aged individuals, certainly they were individuals who had achieved something before the war, certainly they were men rather than women, certainly they were limited in a variety of ways in their prewar careers, so they could not be said to represent the totality of the Jewish community, by the same token however they were authentically Jewish, They were not Germans, they were not imposed, they didn't come from the outside, they came from within. That indeed is the disaster, for throughout they retained the trust of the Jews with everything they did. Throughout they could command even to the last moment and into the extreme. The allegiance of the Jewish people, even those of the Jewish people that criticized them very largely, because in the ultimate sense, they were Jews. And they were believed to be doing what they did

out of desperation, but still with a view to saving what could be saved, to helping whom ever could be helped.

Qu. And this is true of Rumkowski, of Gens, of all of them..

Re. Of course it is less true of some than of others. I make a large generalization here, cutting across Europe and across time. But still I think it's a common denominator.

Qu. Why the idea of Jewish traitor is so unbearable? & I mean, you have British traitors, American traitors. French traitors. This doesn't touch the whole of the French community or British. But when we touch this question about the, let's say, within brackets, "collaboration" of the Jews with the Germans, everybody becomes so sensitiv, even the people who don't like the Jews.

Re. Well, a traitor, you know, it's interesting, but in our own country, in the United States, the only crime defined in the Constitution of the United States is that of treason. And it is to give aid and comfort to the enemy, or to side with the enemy. Those two things. In fact, the Jews did not side with the enemy. They didn't. And it was not their intent to give aid or comfort to the Germans, though inevitably, that is precisely what they did. But they always did it for the purpose of saving Jews. They were making concessions, to an extreme extent. Or else, they took their own lives, which also is an extreme act.

Qu. Did you change your mind since you wrote "The destruction of the European Jews" in this particular point? Because I have the feeling that you were much more harsh, severe, towards the people, when you were writing the book, than you are now.

Re. Well, of course, in the first version, which is, at the moment, the only version in print...

Qu. No, no, I mean..

Re. I know, I know, I speak of the "Destruction of the European X Jews" in its very first and still only version. I was very brief, I was very, very brief about the role of the Jews and their own destruction. And the very brevity of the words made them harsh. It isn't the tone, it isn't the adjectives, but rather is it the sheer brevity, the simple statement that the Jews were in a sense aiding their own destruction. Not necessarily just the Councils, but the Jewish community as a whole, in all of its activities, in complying with German orders, in carrying out German orders, in following what it is that the Germans told them to do. The letter, was moving, in a single direction, to its own destruction. And to say this as I have just said it this minute, so briefly, in a single paragraph, is to be very harsh. Because a single paragraph does not tell what happened in the process of doing these things. What thought what pain occurred during that time. Now, of course, then we did not have the diary of Adam Czerniakow, we did not have a lot of other documents. Today we do. So today, we are not really changing the conclusion. It certainly tell the story in a much elaborate and hence perhaps more consoling fashion.

Qu. Human.

Re. Perhaps a more human fashion. This is not to say that I now believe that the Councils were not a disaster. They were. There is no question of that. In some sense one can see

even more, how much of a disaster they were. But one can see the mechanisms. One can see the step by ^{to me} step process not only on the German side, one can now see it also on the Jewish side as inevitably going from one...

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Re. I don't say they were not a disaster. They were. And now one can see this fact even more clearly than before. I would even go as far as to say they were more of a disaster than I thought it one time. Yes again, we can see the mechanisms by which this happened. We can see how, step by step, the Jewish Councils, not only the Germans, propelled themselves into a situation which became the Final Solution, more the end. And from that sense, that perspective, we have learnt a lot. We.. we know the psychology as well as the administrative steps which lead people in charge of a community in such conditions into the inevitable posture which at the end gives them absolutely no opening, save to join the victims.

Qu. Which they all did, as a matter of fact, voluntarily or not.

Re. And they were victims, quite exactly, quite precisely.

Qu. But [in the entry of July 8, 1942, which is a barely.. not even two weeks before his death,] Czerniakow writes.. because he was criticized by some people, because he organized some kind of a children's festival. And obviously he saw a film before the war,] and he compares himself to the.. one of the protagonists of this film, of the hero of this film. He writes

that he thinks of a film where the captain of a sinking ship gives order to the orchestra to play jazz, and he identifies himself to this captain of the sinking ship. Of course there is no jazz, but there is a kind of children festival.

Re. Yesh, there are chess tournaments, yes, there is a theater, there is a children's festival, everything going on until the last moment. But more important.. these are symbols. These outward cultural activities, these festivals, they are not simply moral building devices, which is what Czerniakow identifies them to be, rather they are symbolic of the entire posture of the ghetto, which is in a process of healing or trying to heal sick people who are soon going to be gassed, which is trying to educate youngsters who will never be growing up, which is in a process of going to find work for people and increase employment in a situation which is doomed to failure. They are going on, as though life will continue. They have an official faith in the survivability of the ghetto even as though all indications are to the contrary. The strategy continues to be: "We must continue, for this is the only strategy that is left. We must minimize the injury, minimize the damage, minimize the losses, but we must continue." And continuity is the only thing in all ghettos.

Qu. But obviously, when he compares himself to this captain of a sinking ship, he knows that everything...

Re. He knows, he knows.. I think he knew what he said.. or he believed the end was coming perhaps as early as October 1941 when he has a note about alarming rumors as to the fate of Warsaw Jewry in the spring. This is also also when Bishhoff.

the head of the Transferstelle, tells him that after all a ghetto is only a temporary device, without specifying for what. He is concerned because in January he has permissions or reports and rumors about Lithuanians coming. He is concerned when Auerswald disappears and is going to Berlin, right around January 20, 1942, which we know to have been the date of the Final Solution Conference in Berlin..

Qu..of the Wannsee Conference..

Re. .. the Wannsee Conference, and even though K Czerniakow in Warsaw behind the walls has no idea of such a conference going on in Berlin, yet he is concerned, that Auerswald, the ghetto commissar, is going to Berlin. He can't imagine why, unless that it is for a purpose that holds no good. And so in February there are more rumors, in March the rumors are becoming even more specific, he now begins to record the departure of Jews from the Lublin ghetto, of Vientz, or Cracow..

Qu. .. Lwow..

Re. And Lwow! Those four that he mentions specifically as having had deportations. And there is absolutely no doubt or question that this is what he is talking about. But he never mentions any destination, and nor does he ask, nor does he ask where the transports are going. He never does.

Qu. He doesn't. ² And we know now that the transports went to Belzec. P 121

Re. Yes. But he does not ask this. And we also know, of course from other sources, that the existence of death camps is already

dy known in Warsaw] certainly by June.

Qu. Oh yes, we know this, absolutely.

Re. We know this.

Qu. We know this. I mean there is no doubt that the leader the Bund knew it, that Adolf Berman knew it..

Re. Yeah, Ringelblum mentions it.

Qu. Ringelblum knew it.

Re. Mentions it.

Qu. I think he was what.. It seems to be an interesting point because he was cut of.. he was cut from the Jews too.

Re. Yes, [but we cannot really decide, that he had no knowledge whatsoever about these ^{Camps} ~~trains~~. All we know is that he didn't mention them in the diary. We cannot make the ultimate determination of what was in his mind. We cannot be sure.]

Qu. But you..

Re. But he had ^{penetrations} ~~permeations~~. He was in no doubt when for example the deportations in Cracow took the form of taking away people not productiv and leaving there people who were productiv. He had no doubt. Knowing what he already knew about the treatment of women and children who weren't been given enough food, that once they were taken out of the ghetto, their survival was hardly likely, their survival was hardly likely. He had no doubt about that. That is why he cut out of the news papers,... mind you, that's where he got some of his information from... he cut out of the Gazetta Zydowska, the official paper

of the ghettos into the General Gouvernement, which is to say those four districts of five districts by 1942; the news that in Cracow the unproductive elements were no longer there, and that therefore the leadership of the ghetto was restructured in order to reflect the new economic character of the community.

Qu. Yes. But he had even the truth much more under his eyes, directly. Because, after all, the people were dying every day in front of him inside the ghetto.

Re. Well...

Qu. He knew that this was the policy.

Re. He knew, because he.. he is sarcastic enough, if that is the word, in December 1941 to remark that now the intelligentsia were dying also. Up to this point, poor people were dying. But by December 1941, members of the intelligentsia were starving to death. And he even has..

Qu. Why.. why does he mention specifically the intelligentsia? at this time?

Re. He mentions it, because there is a difference owing to the plus-structure within the ghetto, invulnerability to starvation: the lower ~~max~~ classes died first, the middle class died a little bit later. Intelligentsia were of course at the top of the middle class. And once they started dying, the situation was really very very bad. And that's the meaning of that. Now, we are dealing with a ghetto where the average consumption was about 1200 calories you see. He mentions it with approval.. with approval, that one petitioner came to him for money and said: "I want money, not in

order to eat, I want money for the rent. To pay the rent for my apartment, because I don't want to die in the street."

This is the kind of comment that Czerniakow writes down in his diary. The meaning of dignity. The approval.

Qu. You mean in the.. a petition from somebody? Who said, "Give me money!"

Re. Yes. Yes. But not for food. Give me money, so that I can pay the rent, because I don't want to die in the street. There were people droppin g dead in the street, who were covered with newspapers.

Qu. Why was the housing more important to him than the food?

Re. To this particular individual, who wasn't eating enough to remain alive, who didn't want to be dying of hunger while collapsing in the street.

Qu. This means that death was not avoidable, but it was avoidable to die... inside or outside.

Re. Of course. Of course. It is one of these sardonic jokes of which he had quite a few. He always had a ... strange... strange description of a band playing in front of a funeral parlor, of a horse with drunken drivers and a dead child running around the grounds. He had.. he had rather sardonic comments about death. He lived with death. He mentions a prominent Jew by the name of Rapoport who laugh3d before he died. And he liked that line so much, that forgetting that he had already written it

once, he wrote it down again. ~~Twice~~

Qu. Twice in the diary?

Re. Twice. He never crossed out anything. He never read anything over. He repeated himself. And this sardonic sense.. this sardonic sense comes through, you see.

Qu. It's beautiful.

Re. (En même temps) He lives with death. And he also approves of the statement..

BOBINE 408

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Qu. When Czerniakow hears the rumors about the deportations from Lublin, Lwow and Cracow, which is on March 1942, ^{p. 112} does he ask in his diary where they are shipped, what happens to them?

Re. No. ¹ [He never does.] He never speculates. He has no suppositions, theories, but in the same time he places that news into the entries that he writes in such a way as to leave no doubt that the development is very ^{menacant} ominous. He has a feeling of doom for the Jews of Warsaw, ^{p. 116} and he recognizes in the deportations in the very early spring from the four ghettos that he does mention that something may well be in the air for Warsaw itself. And every subsequent entries repleat with the anxiety that he feels.

(not)
Qu. But why.. why does it say specifically they are.. they went to death, they were gassed. Because he didn't know, or..

Re. No, I rather doubt that it is because he didn't know. I think we find in the records of Jewish Council members, of Jewish bureau-

crats the same absence of a direct reference to killings, to death camps that we also find in the German correspondence. This is something that they have in common and I suspect for the same reason: they can't really mention these things. For once they do, they can no longer go on with their conduct as though there were still a chance, as though continuity were still possible. In order to do that, one must shut out, however difficult the process may be, the ominous implications of the news and well, even mentioning them, one must at least not say in writing that this is a death sentence. As soon.. As soon as one does that, life is already contiminate, for this man certainly. And indeed, pritty soon he has reached that point. But even then, even in his last entry, he doesn't say it exactly.

Qu. The last entry takes place how long before his suicide?

Re. The last entry is few hours.. The last entry precedes his death by a few hours.

Re. And what does he write? Exactly, in the last entry?

Re. Here is the last entry. You want the whole entry? I can read to you the last paragraphe.

Qu. Yes.

Re. The last paragraphe is like this: "It is 3 o'clock. So far 4000 are ready to go. The orders are that there must be 9000 by 4 o'clock. Some officials came to the post office and issued instructions that all incoming letters and parcels be diverted to the Pawiak prison."

Re. This is the last entry of a man on the afternoon of the day that he commits suicide.

Qu. Ready to go, this means ready to go to Treblinka?

Re. Yes, of course. There is no question..

Qu. We have to say this. He committed su-- .. the first transport of the Jews of Warsaw to Treblinka was the 22nd of July 1942, and he committed suicide the day after, the 23rd of July.

Re. That's right. In other words, on the 22nd, you see, on the 22nd he is called in by Sturmbannführer Hoefele, who is in charge of the resettlement staff. Who has come in there for the express purpose of taking the Jews out of Warsaw. Hoefele tells him, on the 22nd, and here incidently is another fascinating point, Czerniakow is so agitated that he doesn't put the date down correctly. Instead of saying July 22nd, 1942, he says July 22nd, 1940. Hoefele calls him in at 10 o'clock, disconnects the telephones, children are removed from the playground opposite the community building. And then he is told that all Jews, irrespective of sex and age, with certain exceptions, will be deported to the East. To the East.

Qu. Again the East.

Re. Again the East. And by 4 pm. today a contantion of 6000 people must be provided. And this at the minimum will be the daijy quota. Now, he is told that at 10 in the morning of July 22nd 1942. He then goes on, he keeps appealing, he wants certain exemptions, he wants the Council staff to be exempt, he wants the staff of the welfare organizations to be exempt and he is terribly worried that the orphans will be deported and he repeatedly brings up the orph

And on the next day he still doesn't have assurance that the orphans are going to be safe. Now, if he cannot be the caretaker of the orphanage, then he has lost his war, he has lost his struggle.

Qu. But why the orphans?

Re. They are the most helpless/^{element}in the community. They are the little children, it's future. They have lost their parents. They cannot possibly do anything on their own. If the orphan do not have exemption, if he doesn't even get the promise, the words spoken by a German SS officer, not even assurances, which as he knows, cannot be counted on, if he cannot even get the words, what can he think?

Qu. It's very, very good. I think that the orphans are completely symbolic for him.

Re. They are completely..

Qu. This is the massacre of the innocent.

Re. That is the.. well, and completely dependent on him. After all, all sorts of people, they conceivably helped themselves or fought - but what can an orphan do? Without parents

Qu. But we could say that the orphans for him..

Re. Oh, absolutely (les deux parlent en même temps - plusieurs phrases incompréhensibles).. Of course, that's why he has a children's be turned, that's why he is not above extorting money from rich Jews to give it to the⁸⁹ children, that's why he

agitates for schools, that is why he specially worries all the time of the ghetto that it is especially children being over the wall and who are engaged in ^{contraband} smuggling. He doesn't want them to leave the ghetto, he wants them to be taken care of. He rather wants to be able to buy food in the open market on the other side. Of course it's turned down. And he is not in favour of the smuggling precisely because children are in it. And this is his principle responsibility. If he cannot take care of the children, what else can he do? And don't forget his wife, his wife is in the education personal, his wife is an educator.... Nunja Czerniakow, Dr. Felicia Czerniakow, of course. So he has it also from his wife. he has this constant awareness of the children. It runs throughout the diary, and it's his last thought. Some people who report that he wrote a note after he closed the book on the diary, in which he said words to the effect "They want me to kill the children with my own hands".

Qu. Yes, and this was the point for him. He.. the signs that he lost his war.

Re. He lost the war.

Qu. Yes.

Re. And it's remarkable that he knew when he lost. How few are the people that know that, in that moment, know it exactly, know it immediately, know it clearly. He knew it in the afternoon of the 23rd. He had one more meeting with the Germans apparently that day, and he didn't wait beyond that. In the early evening he took his poison.

Qu. Yes...

PLAN DE COUPE MUET SUR LANZMANN A LA FIN DE LA BOBINE 408

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Qu. Well, Czerniakow knew obviously since a/long time, and the
very fact of his suicide is the best proof of this knowledge.

Re. I think that when we look for example at Ringelblum, who also
wrote a diary, we see that knowledge in evidence. We even see the
reasons why, with that knowledge, the Jews went to their death.
Ringelblum writes on June 17th...

Qu. 1942?

Re. 1942. Five weeks before the evacuation began in Warsaw, that
he talked to a friend from another town, in which the conversation
led to the topic of Sobibor, and he mentions Sobibor, where the
Jews, he says, were choked to death with gasses.

Qu. Were k choked?

Re. Choked to death with gasses. The friend asked him: "How long
will we go as sheep to slaughter? Why do we keep quiet? Why is
there no call to escape to the forests, no call to resist?" And
Ringelblum says: "This question torments all of us. But there
is no answer to it, because everyone knows that resistance, and
particularly even if one single German soldier is killed, its
outcome will lead to the slaughter of a whole community, or even
of many communities. The first who are sent to slaughter are
the old, the sick, the children, those who are not able to resist.
The strong ones, the workers, are left meanwhile to be, because
they are needed for the time being." And then he says: "That is
the reason. Why 300 prisoners of war let the Germans kill them
on the way from Lublin to Biała, and these soldiers were known
to have distinguished themselves in the fight for Poland's free-

Qu. You mean, the prisoners of war..

Re. Jewish.. Jewish prisoners of war.

Qu. Jewish.

Re. "Not to act, not to lift ~~th~~ a hand against Germans has since become the quiet, passiv heroism of a common Jew." Not to act.

It is true that non-resistance, the deliberate decision not to resist, was a rational act. And it is very important to realize and recognize this fact: one may act rationally and loose disastrously. The rationality consisted in the ex-.. in the expectation, in consisted of the expectation that perhaps not everybody will die. So if at the beginning a few very capable people would take it into their own hands to resist against the Germans, bringing retribution upon the helpless people inside the ghetto, what then would have been accomplished? For that reason, those capable of resistance didn't. Noone expected, in that circle, and this includes Ringelblum's circle. That everybody would die, although they began to be mortified by the possibility.

Qu. But they had not the feeling that the .. what was at stake was not the death of some individuals or the death of of the Jewish people, but of the whole.. of the Jewish people as a whole, ~~exactly~~ that is the Jewish people of Poland?

Re. They didn't. They didn't see the Final Solution. They saw individual acts in which Jews were being deported, in which Jews were being killed, in which they were decimated, and they didn't see the Gestalt. They didn't see it as the inevitable process whereby European Jews were doomed. And they come to that conclusion, and had they taken the consequential steps, perhaps the picture would have been different. But that is a speculation that we are now engaging only with great futility.

Qu. Yes.

Re. To them, the positive step of resistance, as early as 1942 was dropped with too many dangers. They could not take it upon themselves to bring about the disaster. Were it to happen, they at least would not be its active accomplices or its active participants. And this is the reason they didn't act. And here I speak of men like Ringelblum and those of his friends who were being celebrated for being heroes, for.. for being steadfast and for speaking the true mind of the Jewish people. And yet they rationally decided the very action which indeed was taken by the Jewish Councils. We can see the biggest example in a sense in the Lodz ghetto. Because the Lodz ghetto existed for the longest time. It was not disbanded, you see, until the summer of 1944.

Qu. It was the first one too.

Re. It was the first and almost the last. And because of that very fact, the argument even today is perhaps the strategy of minimization, the strategy of giving up Jews in order to save others could not be said to be totally false, because it almost, if not quite succeeded in Lodz. I happen not to agree with the argument. I happen not to think that Lodz was capable of survival, the Red Army was too far away to deliver the Jews of Lodz from bondage. And it is remarkable & on the other hand, you see, that in Lodz particularly the deportations began so early that by the spring of 1942 there was great certainty within the ghetto as to what happened to the deportees.

Qu. In the deportations, the people were shipped to Chelmno.

Re. They were shipped to Chelmno.

Qu. Very near.

they continued to mid-april 1942, and in the course of these deportations, 44 000 from Lodz to a death camp.

Qu. To Chelmno?

Re. To Chelmno. On April 12th, an SS officer came and.. told a story, that there were 100 000 Jews in a place called Warthbrücken, that they were having a nice life there; that they had all the amenities of civilized existence, that 30 000 Ethnic Germans had passed through and had left them furniture with directs and everything else, the provisions were excellent and so on and so on. But, by May trucks were coming into the ghetto and were unloading the personal belongings of people including blankets and ~~hmt~~ bedsheets and..

Qu. Prayer..

Re. even.. even Talits, yes. They found skirts there, pants, underwears /coats with.. with^{jackets,} torn seams out of which personal identifications cards and valuables were falling out, and when they looked at the addresses - and I am now speaking of Jewish workers in the ware houses and so on - and saw who these deportees were, then they also knew what had happened to them, because these were their own people. There could no longer be any question, there could no longer be any doubt as to the ultimate fate of the deportees. And that as early as May. And ever since then, when in the Lodz ghetto there was fear of deportations, one could see it in a fluctuating price of one black market com-

modity, or one commodity that was traded at the free market, and that was sacharine. The price of sacharine went up or fell with the anxiety felt by the Jews towards future deportations.

Qu. Why?

Re. It's an exact measurement of the anxiety level. The greater the anxiety, the more the purchases of sacharin in the market and the higher the price.

Qu. Yes, but why? Because they wanted to take sacharin with them

Re. No, I don't know, & I don't think they wanted to take it with them. Sacharin is sweet - it's the only sweetness that was left. Deportation is very bitter.

Qu. Yes.

Re. Well, if you read the Chronicles of the Lodz ghetto, you see that and you are startled by it, but there it is. We have an exact measurement of the mood of the population of the Lodz ghetto in the fluctuating price of sacharin, and what is even more interesting - the Chroniclers in the Lodz ghetto who wrote this record recognized the fact and noted down the price of sacharin as the barometer..

Qu. Of the anxiety..

Re. Of the anxiety felt by the population. They so labeled it, they recognized it for what it was. There wasn't any question

in their minds.

Q. What is the formula exactly of Ringelblum, "the mute hero

Re. .. of the common Jew was passivity". It is a heroism, but we must not confuse two things. Heroism can be a disaster also, and in this case it is.

Q. Yes, but.. and the Warsaw ghetto uprising?

Re. The Warsaw ghetto uprising comes very late, in the chronology of events. 310 000 Jews were deported from the Warsaw ghetto from the end of July to the beginning of September 1942.

PHONE 410

Ass. Burlington, Hilberg 33

Q. Yes, but the Warsaw ghetto uprising..

Re. ..came..

Q. Why did it happen?

Re. It came after many deportations. It came late, in a chronological sense. Up to the onset of the major operation which begins in July 1942 and extends into September of that year, the ghetto had already lost, due to the death rate, which reached 1% of the population per month, a substantial portion of its population, maybe 20%.

Q. You mean from the beginning of the existence of the ghetto?

Re. Yeah.

Qu. ... ~~is~~ till July?

Re. Yeah, it had lost, well, let's say 15% of its people. In other words, there were months, when 5000 died per month. Now 310 000 were deported in the summer months of 1942, leaving approximately 70 000. And that's a remnant, which means that perhaps 90 000 had died, 310 000 had been deported and 70 000 were left.

Qu. ... and had been gassed.

Re. Yeah, naturally. Of the 70000 half were engaged in labour. This was ~~x~~ the strongest element of the Community, physically the strongest, the one that got the biggest rations, and best capable of survival. But in January, there was another deportation, and in course of which the entire Council was destituted.

Qu. I mean.. the people who followed Czerniakow, the..

Re. The people that followed him, the successors. And in the course of that deportation, maybe 10% of those that remained were deported. So now we have a little over 60 000.

Qu. And no Jewish Council any more.

Re. Hardly, no. There is no.. no recruit of any activity by the Jewish Council after January 1943. At this point, the resistance organizations, which have already begun to organize, become more important. They have already been shooting at some Council members, but ~~it~~ now they achieve a distinct goal, purpose.

and with quiet resolution they get a few weapons, not very many. The battle then ensued the following April between the Germans and the Jews, which has come down as the Warsaw ghetto battle and which is symbolic in a sense to the extent that Auschwitz is of the entire destruction process, although they were two extremes, that battle was a very ~~very~~ small infantry engagement. The Germans reported 16 killed and 85 wounded throughout the battle. One should not look at this statistic as though there were extremely few German casualties. Because under the circumstances, the Jews possessed weapons that would not have equipped a modern infantry company of that day.

Qu. Aha.

Yyyv Re. They had two or three automatic weapons, they had a few dozen rifles, pistols home made explosif devises, and it is with this weapons that they killed 16 people and wounded 85 more so far as the Germans are concerned, and maybe some more because there might have been some of the wounded dying later. But in the main, I have very little question in my own mind, that the statistics are correct. Now, on the German side, there were several thousand men of whom some were just trainees with perhaps four weeks of training. I noticed for example that the Germans did not even motors in the battle and I suspect that the reason for this is, motor training is something that is given to soldiers not during the first or the second or the third week, but somewhat later. It did use the German Army for certain purposes

German ~~ingenieurs~~ engineers and artillery. they used police units and they had collaborators. Ukrainians, who numbered well over 300 in that battle, more than 10% of those that were employed at any given date. So the victory came to the German side after several weeks of fighting in streets. And it is ~~x~~ this engagement, this symbolic engagement which is now known as the Warsaw ghetto battle. On the Jewish side of course, the casualties were much higher. There are certain elements to be studied in connection with the Jewish organization for battle. The most conspicuous of the being the fact, that the Jews were organized along political party lines, that even in this final hour, they did not lose their identity as members of a particular movement, whether it were the Revisionists, the Bundists, the Communists or whatever.

Q. Or HaShomer HaZair.

A. Or HaShomer HaZair. So they were fighting at platoons of political parties, which is a rather strange manifestation of activity but which under the circumstances is explainable, because political parties had in peace time being the primary way in which Jews organized themselves for political action. And in the pluralistic Polish State, they tried to field the candidate for office both locally and nationally. So, here is a manifestation, a leftover to be understood only in the context of the total history of the Jewish Community, but ..

Q. But I mean, if we compare... my question was this: if we try to put together the quotation of ~~Sholem~~ about the mute heroism of uprising, one can say of the common Jew and the Warsaw battle.

that the uprising took place because they couldn't.. ~~fall~~ fool themselves any more.

Re. Absolutely, because Ringelblum writes in June 1942, and it was hard enough for Ringelblum to fool himself as he makes quite clear. now after the deportations had taken place, after September 1942 it was hardly possible for anybody to fool himself although some still did. And thus I think there is a world of difference between June and the end of 1942, let alone the spring of 1943.

Qu. This means, at this time they knew what was at stake..

Re. At this time..

Qu. .. was the destruction of the entire people.

Re. Of the entire people. They could not have any hope for survival. They could not even trust production to save them. The fact is, even that - a Czerniakow was still capable of writing "a sawing machine can save a life", but these people now knew that not even a sawing machine could save their life, and from that standpoint, they organized themselves for battle. This is the only cause left it's understood, and understandable as an evolution, but it was such a rapid evolution that we may justify to call it a revolution in Jewish life, because once again, Jews were fighting with weapons in hand, conspicuously, visibly, watched by the entire world. And they had not done that for quite some time in quite that manner. Therefore, one justifiably appoints to the Warsaw ghetto battle as a pivotal development of Jewish

History.

Qu. As what?

Re. A pivotal development of Jewish History.

Qu. Pivotal?

Re. Yeah, pivotal. A development that has had a profound influence on Israel for example and its own stands in/^{it's} international relations.

Qu. You think that it was a kind of recuperation of violence, ~~for example~~ of the violence by the Jews themselves?

Re. I think that when we talk of normalization of Jewish life and when we talk of an integration of Jewish life into the family of Nations, what comes with it, whether one wishes it or not is quite simply the organization of Jews into Armies and her fighting was like everybody else is, or so long as everybody else does. And this begins in April 1943, it begins there, in Warsaw.

Qu. And such a .. such an idea of resistance, of fighting never occurred in the mind of a man like Czerniakow?

Re. No.

Qu. It was unthinkable for him?

Re. It was unthinkable that (in this entire diary, which is

after all quite long, there is hardly the vaguest reference to resistance. One would have to read into the arrest of certain people who had been publishing certain pamphlets an awareness by Czerniakow of something going on. It is as though he was not even aware of anyone else doing something in that connection, let alone him doing it. There is no direct spoken, written word that one can point to. It was out of doubts, it was completely out of his mind.

Qu. And his way of acting in order to alleviate the situation..

Re. The alleviation.. the alleviation attempt...

Qu. ... was what? It was the classical Jewish way?

Re. It was quite ~~the~~ classical. It is.. it is intercession, you see. In normal times, each Jew writes his own appeal, each Jew makes his own petition. But any time, when a ghetto is formed the Council takes over the petitioning, that's the meaning in Jewish terms of a Council having been formed. The Council petitions in behalf of the Community, and the Chairman of the Council is the chief petitioner. And it is this role that Czerniakow plays to the N-th degree, because he petitions almost every day for something or other.

Qu. To the Germans?

Re. To the Germans. And his is not.. his is not an attempt to save the Jewish people as a whole, rather he devulgues every day effort to save specific Jewish people.

HILBERG 138

Qu. Aha.

Re. And this is entirely within the Jewish tradition, and that he does to the end.

BOBINE 411, plan muel, Burlington 35.

HILBERG 36 - M. Hilberg travers le campus.

HILBERG 37

HILBERG 38 - plan muel

HILBERG 39 - plan muel, dont le son seul se trouve sur la cassette 22, face B.

BURLINGTON? HILBERG 43

Qu. When the time came for Adam Czerniakow to take on his own on his own shoulders the responsibility of the deportation, means to execute the German orders, well, he simply chose to die. He committed suicide. We know that there are other leaders of the Jewish Councils who complied and we can say that all of them did so, because they hoped to save at least a part of the people. But this was obviously an agonizing choice for all of them, because as a matter of fact they had to choose and to decide who among the remnants of the Jewish Community would live, and who would die. I think that we will never be able to decide, and we cannot judge what was the right way, and what was the wrong way.

would

Re. If one ~~would~~ to have assumed to begin with that the object of German measures is the total extermination of the Jewish people, its total annihilation, than any participation in the making of lists or in the preparation of transports is indeed participation in that process. That is how we indeed look at

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the event now in that respect. At the time, of course, the Council were engaged in hope. Each one had its own reasons for hope, but all of them put together were still trying to look for a way to save people that they presumed might survive this process. And so whenever a list is being made up, whenever a quota was placed before them, they would basically ^{completely} apply, appealing only for certain individuals, or categories of individuals, in a hope that thereby they were saving lives. There is of course a banal comparison that one can make, it's the half empty glass and the half full glass. It's exactly the same. For them, a ghetto that was half emptied, was still half full. That is how they looked at it. Czerniakow is rare, he is almost unique in that he did not fool himself. He did not say, well, I still have 400 000 people, I still have 300 000 people I still have 200 000 people. He did not say that with 1000 I save 10 000 and that with 10 000 I save 100000. He did not... he did not know that formula. That is his great merit.

Qu. This was a formula of Rumkowski.

Re. This was a formula of a ^{very} number of leaders of Jewish Communities in Poland and even outside of Poland, and it was a formula for disaster. It saved very few, if any, of the victims.

Qu. Yes. And what do you think about the .. the leaders of the Hungarian Jewish Community, who organized ^a the transports, and the knew, almost for sure, that the people of this transport would be saved, would be rescued, and they were in fact. And they chose a sample of the Jewish Community. They chose their own family, they chose the rich, the people who were able to pay, they chose some intellectuals, some artists, some very famous

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rabbis, the kind of Arche of Noah, it's not my.. I don't invent the expression, but it was used by them. They think they would be able to start again the life of the Jewish people from this.. root of this remnant, as you wish.

Re. In Hungary, there were actually two bodies of leaders: the regular Jewish Council in Budapest, and the Rescue Committee. These were two separate bodies, the rescue Committee having been formed in actual fact before the arrival of the Germans in March 19, 1944. I think that the dominant thinking within the Rescue Committee was, that it would be hardly possible to suppose that the Jewish people inside Hungary could not now be aware of what was installed for them. Everywhere else, Jewry had disappeared. In Germany, in Poland to the North, in Czechoslovakia, all around, wherever they looked. This was an island. In 1944, containing three quarters of a million Jews, the largest remaining Jewish Community of Europe. The Russians were not too far from the frontiers of Hungary itself, and now the was placed on sheer time, sheer delay. Anything that would work was tried, but the only thing that was feasible was negotiation. By mobilizing certain resources for German needs, in ignorance of the Hungarian Government, they as a staff managed to put together a transport....

BOBINE 412

Burlington, Hilberg 44

Re. One should point out, that, whereas in Poland and in other parts of Europe the basic assumption of the Jewish Communities

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was, that there was a chance for Jewry to be saved and that therefore they were delivering some Jews to their deaths in a hope of thereby rescuing the remained up. Kasztner and his associates was operating within the Vaad Hatzala, within the Rescue Committee of Hungary, on exactly the opposite promise. He really was assuming that Jewry in Hungary was doomed, and that only by saving some of them could one thereby achieve anything at all.

Qu. You really think so?

Re. I really think that he thought that Jewry was doomed. He says that within Hungary, within Budapest the Rescue Committee knew, and had known for a long time all about Auschwitz. They knew what Auschwitz was. They could not mistake it. They could not, once the Germans walked into Hungary, that day, March of 19, 1944, they could not possibly mistake that development. And that is the reason, that almost immediately they began to think in terms of rescuing some parts of Jewry, if not all of it, from what they assumed to be the certain death of the Hungarian Jews. And in this their premise, their basic assumption was the exact opposite of what it had been of the Jewish Communities and Jewish Councils in so many parts of Poland or Germany or Holland or other areas of German dominated Europe. And yet both, the Jewish Councils who made up lists, made them up in Berlin, made them up in Frankfurt, made them up in Slovakia, putting together the victims a thousand at a time, and Kasztner, who made up his list of 1700 to be saved, both were playing God.

Qu. Yes, but .. what do you think of the .. of the people of the precisely Hungarian Jews who were shipped to Auschwitz, which

means that they were not included in the Kasztner list of people to be saved, and these people survived Auschwitz by chance. They say that the... if they had known, if Kasztner and the other leaders of the rescue committee would have come into the Hungarian ghettos and if they had told them what was Auschwitz, and don't go there, maybe 400 000 Hungarian Jews wouldn't have been gassed in Auschwitz. Because they could have tried to escape. At least, there would not have been such an amount of victims. It's what they say, and I think it's a very strong argument, a very strong point.

Re. Whenever there was a situation in which Jews were engaged in discussions with German officers, not only in Hungary, but elsewhere, there was an element of knowing, which was imparted by the Germans to the Jews and which was not passed on to the Community at large. Now all kinds of reasons would be given, not only by Kasztner who was operating outside really the framework of the Jewish Council in Hungary, but also by the Council themselves, for not informing the victims, for not warning the victims, for not telling the victims to stay home because of what the Council itself might have suspected or even known. All ~~sorts~~ sorts of reasons intended for not informing the victims. The greater chaos that would ensue. The less gentle means that would be employed by the SS units in rounding up the victims. The suffering of the victims knowing now that they would die, and yet incapable of fleeing, because the ghetto was surrounded, or because something else was happening to prevent them effectively to oppose the . So there is in that sense you see within Jewish leadership generally a feeling that to have informed the victims crossly of whatever those

in the Councils who had access to information had learned, would create if not chaos, then some great amount of suffering which at least could be avoided. There is in this, you see, a notion almost akin to euthanasia, of of a painless, if not exactly beautiful death. There is a sense of sparing people knowledge, because knowledge equals suffering. It did not view knowledge as a tool to be used, they viewed it as a cause of suffering, and that's why they withheld the information. Now, here I only try to understand from the writings left behind, from the diaries and the reports and the testimonies of these people, what it is that they were thinking. Now, what they were saying, you see, in so many different contexts. In these different testimonies and memoirs, was the same. They were going to spare the Jews more suffering, and therefore they did not inform.

Qu. Well, I think that what you say is very.. very important. I am absolutely prepared to admit that there is a .. something absolutely obscene in this kind of discussion so many years later, and without having been personally involved in this. As I said, I would never dare to judge, but we are obliged to.. to go on with this question. And these survivors of Auschwitz, Hungarian Jews who survived as I said by chance Auschwitz, say, if we would have been warned, the Slovakian border was open, it was not so much guarded, at least we would have attempted something. If the leaders would have told us, Auschwitz means sure death with gas, we would have maybe been able to do something. And I understand very well what you say, and you say that Kasztner and these people wanted to avoid the suffering, because knowledge is suffering. And this other point which is very strong too, that for Kasztner Jewry was doomed. This is probably the reason why he

wanted to save this arch of Noah. But I thought myself that he couldn't warn the people, his own people precisely because he wanted to save them. But I thought that he wanted to save a big part of them. In the negotiation with Eichmann, and he was negotiating in order to save the Jews, and because he was negotiating, he couldn't talk to the Jews because the negotiation would have failed immediately.

Re. Now, you see, that.. that comes through in this particular case, not in Kasztner's own report - you have to read Eichmann. And when Eichmann talks about also the same negotiations, it becomes clear that it is a bargain, and that in the turn for 1700 Jews being saved initially, 18 000, as many as 18 000 later. In return for that, Kasztner is supposed not to say a word as he tours Hungary, as he speaks to various councils and various personalities. Kasztner was to keep his mouth shut about what he knows, or suspects or feels it truth. That's the bargain. But you see, for Kasztner, this was essentially a matter of maximizing under these gruesome circumstances the chance of saving many people as possible. He after all was negotiating not for only 1700 or even for 18 000, his ambition, especially after the Germans found themselves amenable of striking some kind of a bargain, was to save a large part of the Hungarian Jews. Never, never all of them, because of that.. it was too late for that and the process was too quick, but he was after all engaged in those negotiations in which trucks were mentioned as a means to really save a very large number of the victims. And had he at the same time called upon the victims to resist in the ghetto or to flee, well, then there would be no bargain. would there be and then the entire strategy

would be one dommed by the negotiator himself. He made his decision, he stuck to his decision, win or loose. He made decisions under conditions of enormous uncertainty. That is something that true leaders well appreciatdd and are familiar with. The fact that his success is really extremely small should not detract us from realizing that the ambition was much greater.

Qu. But you seem to have a real admiration for him? You seem to like him. And what do you think of the judgement, because there was a trial of Kasztner in Israel, and the sentence which was passed, I mean, the attendu of the sentence ~~mf~~ was that he sold his soul to the devil.

Re. Let me say, in admitting that I have some sympathy for the man, first I ^{owe} ~~owed~~ to him a great deal of insight in the process of destruction, it is from his insight that I gathered my own about what transpired.

BOBINE 413, SON SEUL 045, enregistré sur la cassette 22, face B

Ass. Burlington, Hilberg 45

Re. Above all, however, I can admire Kasztner in a way I also have feelings for Czerniakow, the Chairman of the Jewish Council in the Warsaw ghetto, or Mordechai Anielewicz, the leader of the Jewish rebellion in the ghetto, because all three share one characteristic: they saw events as they actually transpired, they did not substitute illusions for reality. They all died, each in a different way. For Czerniakow the only out was the suicide. For Mordechai Anielewicz, it was fighting with gun in

hand. And Kasztner was also to pay with his life eventually for what he had done, castigated by his own people. But in any case, there is no question, that what I look for in my own personal appraisal of the participants of the process, in the process, Jews who were caught in it, is clear-sightedness. Now, there are reasons why people knew. Obviously, after the major deportations in the summer of 1942, people would know in Warsaw what was in store for the rest of the Community. And after that rebellion, how could anyone have major doubts about what was to happen elsewhere in Europe. Kasztner in particular was a person who had gathered reports in 1941, in 1942, in 1943. Hungary was the place to which refugees came. First from Poland, then from Slovakia, then from yet other places. Reports were multiplying and were sent on to the outside world. Here was a collection agency for information. He... he did not of course have every detail, but he knew what Auschwitz was. He was in no doubt about it. And knowing what he knew, he drew the correct conclusions, which is that the Hungarian Jews would not be spared. There would be no exception made for them. Of course we are talking now about 1944, and by then a lot of information had been flowing in. He is in a better position to appreciate what had happened than those who had to make these kinds of decisions two years earlier.

Qu. But the... the...

Re. Even so, you must grant that there were other people in Hungary, there were members of the Jewish Council in Hungary, there were prominent Jews in Hungary, there were simple people

in Hungary who did not think that just because the rest of European Jewry had already disappeared that inevitably Hungarian Jews would follow and also march into the gas chambers. So he does deserve a credit for making a prediction that was true. For it isn't enough to know. One must also conclude from the knowledge what is most likely going to happen. He did.

Qu. Yes, he did it. He did it and he choose whom he would save.

Re. X He chose whom he would save because he did not really think that he could save the entire population. And he chose whom he would save because he had to make these decisions very quickly. He was, without doubt, tilted in process, he tilted in the very first transport the rescue of 1600 of 1700 people in such a way that an undue proportion of them came from his home town, from Cluj, and for that he has not been forgiven. Furthermore, he made no bounds about it he did not lie about it, he says so in his report. And no one schooled in any theory of ethics can possibly load him for doing that. But he also states, and I think it is important to repeat, that while it would have been tempting to make that first transport one exclusively of children, that was not feasible, because then the Hungarian authorities would have become very suspicious, and the Hungarian authorities would have stepped in, and then the negotiations would have collapsed. So from this standpoint, it had to be a stratified.. a stratified transport, it had to include all kinds of people. In this group were of course orthodox Jews. In it were Jews from Cluj and in it were Jews who were paying money to be on a transport. That's corruption. By any definition. But from that we should not conclude, that he could simply have

made a positiv choice of the most.. well the most innocent, or the youngest, or the weakest. He could not have done that either.

Qu. Do y ou think that Czerniakow would have behaved like him?

Re. No. Czerniakow was trying in his own way, because. I as we know, in the last hours of his life, on ~~a~~ ^{the} very last day of his life he was still petitioning petitioning for exemptions, members of the Community or members of the organizations operating within the Community. Jewish Self Help. And he was above all petitioning as we know for the children. But he ~~wasn't~~ couldn't play that game. He could not persist. He could not continue. That why he didd right after the deportatbns began. Different person. Different personality.

Qu. Yes. Coupe.

Ass. Burlington, Hilberg 46.

Re. If we look at the entire institution of Jewish Councils, Juden-
raete, all over Europe, we do have to focus some intention on the first one, which was in Germany itself. Long before there was a decree instituted in 1939, presumed ~~that~~ ^{to which} all the Jews so defined by the German law had to belong to a single Jewish organization which would henceforth be responsible for the execution of various directives, before that happened, as a matter of fact six years before it happened, almost immediatly after the assumption of power by Adolf Hitler, the Jews themselves organized a national organization, eine Reichsvertretung, which specifically means an organization which would represent the Jews of Germany, with

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the view to conducting an open, an honest debate with the new regime, presumably about Jewish rights and Jewish hopes. in the new era. Now, this is the very organization that later on of course is taken over by the Interior Ministry and which becomes a tool for property administration, deportations and all kinds of measures..

Qu. Excuse me, excuse me, you mean that the Jews themselves in 1933 disbanded voluntarily all their organizations..

Re. No, they did not in 1933 disband any organizations. They did however create a new one. They created a national organizations, one which was going to represent the Jewish Communities of Germany in debate with whatever authorities would be willing to engage ⁱⁿ debate with them, in there were no such authorities. But the Jewish expectation was that out of the diversity of Jewish organizations and agencies, that existed up to that moment, there was going to be one centralized body, one which would represent the Jewish Communities, the Reichsvertretung..

Qu. Built on the model of the unique party. There was in Germany a unique political party, ~~was~~ the nazi party, very quickly. And they..

Re. Well, there was.. I say centralization, I do not wish to imply by that that there was an imitation of the nazi party in any sense whatsoever.

Qu. I think this myself.

Re. But it was clear to the Jewish leadership that inasmuch as there was now within Germany one block, if not yet one single Bewegung, or movement, with which they x would have to deal. That they in turn had to have one body speaking through one voice in so far as there was agreement. And thereby engaging with this new entity, with this new phenomenon in an open debate, as they saw it. So they saw it as a necessity. They could not approach this single body through a variety of voices and special pbeaders. They were going to have one viewpoint, they were going to have one representation.

Qu. Yes.

Re. And they called it Reichsvertretung. Strictly speaking, a representation x for the entire Reich of the Jews who resided there.

Qu. And how this Reichsvertretung became later on let's say a tool in the machinery of destruction?

Re. It became a tool by decrees signed on.. on July 4, 1939, rather late, I mean, six years later. An Interior Ministry measure which was signed by Frick and by Hess and by the Education Minister Lust, Minister for Church Affairs, one of the last he signed, Kerr. And in that decree the name of the Reichsvertretung was changed to Reichsvereinigung. And now y of course..

Qu. Which means exactly?

Re. Reich association, or something. And now of course the various

Community organizations became branches of this Reichsvereinigung, they now lost their autonomous character, they were going to receive directives from the Jewish Reichsvereinigung in Berlin.

SONNE 414

Ass. Burlington, Hilberg 47

Re. The general tendency today is to try to exonerate Germany not of a collective guilt, but of an historical responsibility, and to try to convince the people that the Holocaust was a act of a handful of people and not of the whole, not of the German state as a whole. I would like you to help us to understand how the destruction process could only be accomplished on the basis of a general consensus of the German nation. Because the annihilation of six million Jews was a very complicated task which created numerous problems, huge problems to the perpetrators.

Re. Nothing is as salient and immediately obvious about the process of destruction itself and the immense complexity that is involved in rooting out an entire people which as of 1932 is fully integrated in society and ten years later dies in gas chambers. One cannot begin to imagine until one sees the actual documents in correspondence at hand. How many steps had to be taken by how many people these steps had to be planned, and what sort of expertise and what kind of specializations were called upon to solve the innumerable problems from definitions and expropriations and concentration measures and the deportations and the final construction of gas chambers. One cannot imagine the process without the participation of lawyers and of diplomats of accountants and

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various technicians of the engineering sense and the engineering branches. One cannot imagine it without clerks. One cannot imagine it without the all ever present system of records and paper -- tons of paper. And the reason is that we live in a bureaucratic society and thus the destruction of the Jews necessarily also had to be bureaucratic. It involved the civil servants, the military, industry and the Party and it could not have been brought off by a single group of ideologically convinced Nazis or of a single mobilized force like the SS. It required forced implementation of the talents of all of these people. In fact, nothing is ultimately so bizarre about the destruction of the Jews as the fact that looking at it in its small components we see very mundane, ordinary day-by-day activities and procedures. The land on which a death camp is to be built has to be condemned and the condemnation proceedings are much in the way one would acquire land for any other public purpose. The trains that carried the victims to the gas chambers must be paid for. Wherever one turns, there is the regular procedure of ordinary bureaucrats employed for irregular and extraordinary events. That is what is the basic characteristic of this process. We see juxtapost every day and in every office. The ordinary bureaucrat utilizing the traditions, the knowhow and the procedures to which he has been accustomed and which will immediately be familiar to all of his colleagues to accomplish unheard of things. He is capable of mobilizing this bureaucratic exercise for this ultra new, at least in a final solution phase, completely unprecedented undertaking.

Qu: Could you state some of the difficulties they impounded in the affairs. There must have been a lot of that -- contradictions...

Re: Well, I can list the administrative difficulties and problems almost randomly. To give an example: The Jews of Warsaw were deported in the summer of 1942 -- so precipitously, so fast that the German administration -- that is to say the trustorship offices and the .. that managed the real estate are saying now who is going to pay the rents. And the German city administration is saying now who is going to pay the electric bills and the gas bills. And they must deal with this problem. They have to have meetings about it. They have to re-establish the equilibrium which is the budget you see. This is a small problem resulting from the sudden exodus of 500,000 people.

Qu: There are no Jews anymore?

Re: There are no Jews anymore.

Qu: The bills, the bills...

Re: The bills become due, of course. Of course, of course. And this is just one small segment in one particular place which occupies as a problem the people who had to deal with it. Or take the diplomat who had to negotiate with satellite countries to convince them to implement anti-Jewish measures much in the way in which the Germans have implemented these measures. The diplomat is pressuring and trying to induce satellite states to institute legislation beginning with the definition of the term Jew.

Qu: In the way in which the Germans want the term Jew to be defined.

Re: And of course this requires diplomatic expertise. This requires the lawyers who are familiar with the international law and the international procedure negotiating. And this kind of problem also has to be solved. Or you might take as yet another example the whole question of the cost, not that the cost was so great but still, the cost of the materials that had to be used for the construction of a concentration camp, of a death camp. Or the correspondence in this connection between Speer, the Minister for Armaments and P_____, who was of course in charge of all the concentration camps in Germany. Speer, after looking at one concentration camp, said you are proceeding too extravagantly. You are using too many materials. And poor _____ says answer: (In German) And he says what does he want? Doesn't he realize that by his insistence upon primitive construction the death rate, which is already indescribable, will be higher still. An administrative problem. And it comes from a man who is in charge Reichsbahn, who is in charge of the mobilization of Germany for the war and insisted to the SS that you are using too many materials. You are not being ^{primitive} frugal enough in the construction of these camps. So many of these problems occur again and again and they are only administrative. Mind you, the principal problems were psychological. The principal difficulties were in the psyche domain. They also had to be dealt with. Morale and questions of morality, discipline, corruption, the man's conscience, and they too required expertise. They too required solutions. Thus, we see that there is hardly a segment of the German administrative structure which at one point does not make its appropriate contribution to the final result. And it matters not whether you are looking in places as remote as the churches or in those

bodies where you expect extreme action to be taken in the police or in the SS. Or in anybody in between. Everyone at some point is called upon to do something. And the critical factor of the destruction of the Jews is that everybody did his part at the right time.

Qu: Yes. Could you, could you give some real examples of this, of the involvement?

Re: The involvement in the destruction process follows the process itself. A destruction process has an inherent pattern. Before people can be gassed in the gas chamber, they have to be concentrated so that they may be seized for deportation. And before they are concentrated one has to define who the Jews are, who the victims are.

Qu: Could we talk about the Poles as they in turn, where did they finish?

Re: Well, you take the definition as one of the earliest problems which faced the bureaucracy in the Interior Ministry.

Qu: Yes, but it is a key problem?

Re: It is an absolute key problem because it is the first key step. And it is when the Interior Ministry decided that a Jew is HE who has two Jewish grandparents by religion and who himself belongs to the Jewish religion or else at the moment is married to a Jewish person. Or any person who has three Jewish grandparents, regardless of his own religion: or four Jewish grandparents, again no matter what his religion. When they write the definition in this way, they have solved a key problem.

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ROBINE 415

Re: The definition of the Jews is a real breakthrough in that it sets up an automatic procedure attracting the victims. It's a bureaucratic and administrative solution. It makes possible the automatic sorting of the victims and therefore it prepares the way for subsequent actions. But even here we see an administrative apparatus required to deal with the on-going problems that this particular definition has generated. People have to find out who their ancestors were. A new profession is created,

. They have to look for records in the various offices, registration offices, and baptismal certificates...

Qu: What is this exactly for?

Re: These are people who have to find out who their parents were, or who the grandparents were, or perhaps even the great grandparents were in order to answer the basic question -- "How many of your ancestors were Arian? How many of your ancestors did not belong to the Jewish religion?" And after all for important promotions and important jobs proof that one was not Jewish was essential. So an entire profession is being created as a consequence of this definition. Furthermore, the courts are being given a certain amount of business. The definition says that a half-Jew is to be counted as a Jew if on the date of the issuance of the measure he belonged to the Jewish religion. But what exactly does belonging to the religion mean? Is a young woman whose father is Jewish

Qu: Mother?

Re: Mother. Whose father is Jewish and who, therefore, under the Jewish definition would not belong to the Jewish religion, but who would have accompanied her

father to the synagogue every Sunday. Would such a young woman be considered Jewish? Reichsvereinigung decides that she is. She goes to court and wins. The court agrees with her. She is not Jewish because she went to the synagogue to please her father not because she wanted to belong to the Jewish religion. A court action has been generated here. But even more important in this consequence is the problem of what to do with those people who are decidedly and definitely not Jewish but, who are by the same token, not one hundred percent German either. These are the people who have one grandparent who is Jewish, a so-called of the second degree, or people who have two Jewish grandparents but who do not belong to the Jewish religion and who are not married to any Jewish person on that crucial date, which is of course the cut-off date. So these are now of the first degree. German bureaucrats keep asking into 1942, into 1943, who can the solution of the Jewish problem be really final. If we have a third ^{new} Reich, if we who will remain here. And now you see an endless debate. You see the bureaucrats being troubled by that question to such an extent that if their proportion of continent of even the most important conference that was ever held on the subject of the final solution, namely the conference of January 20, 1942, is devoted to the question of what to do with . Should be deported of the first degree. Should of the second degree become Germans? Should mixed marriages be broken up? And curiously, these problems cannot be solved. They are so intricate. They bring into play the fundamental issue of here is a person with one foot in a Jewish community and another in a German community

the problem is not to surrender to the final solution that half of the person which is German. And they cannot solve the problem. So here you see even in this very relative simple beginning definition the consequences extending until the very end of the war in such a way to engage the attention of specialists, of courts, of party officers debates correspondence, meetings in a typical fashion, that is typical of the bureaucracy. Now consider the definition of a Jewish enterprise. Now this is a corporate body, a corporate entity. It requires its own definition. It has to do with who holds the stocks, it has to do with how many Jews are on the board of directors. Very important questions because if something is a Jewish enterprise then it becomes an object for companies that are interested in its acquisition. Again, there is debate. Again, there is the a question. Sometimes these questions are resolved, sometimes not. Sometimes that enterprise will simply fire one or another of its managing personnel and become Arian by process of firing its owner. Sometimes this cannot be done. So you see here is the Economy Ministry coming into the picture with its defining powers. Or take the Finance Ministry -- it has to solve the problem of taxation.-- special taxes, such as are imposed upon the Jews as a consequence of the decrees of November 1938 which are essentially property taxes even though they are called _____ and so on. That is to say, an exaction for what the Jews did in November 1938 to one German diplomat in Paris. The Finance Ministry is very busy trying to devise the formulas. How do you.. How do you exact a tax, the final amount of which is fixed at one billion Duetsch marks. How do you do this? How do you impose any measure in the form of a tax with the requirement that you shall have collected in the end so much and so much money?

Qu: Could we say that these are the bureaucrats who are not ideologists who throws the contradictions of the ideologists?

Re: They are...

Qu: They make the breakthrough.

Re: They make the breakthrough because they see the problem because they are pragmatic, because they are goal directed, because they are rational.

Qu: Because they have time too?

Re: Well, at the beginning they have more time than at the end. And at the beginning they take the time. At the beginning they make more mistakes. At the beginning, as one researcher called it, it was a twisted road -- there were turns and other turns. Even at the beginning however I have the impression of surefootedness, of people knowing where they are headed, even if not knowing the precise goal. They have at least a sense of direction. They don't error in favor of the victim at any time. They always resolve questions in such a way as to make matters worse for the victim. They know at least that much. Their problems arise when they have to protect the German nation from the consequences of an anti-Jewish action. When they have to worry about what is to happen to a German creditor to whom a Jew owes money and the Jew of course no longer pay because he has been expropriated. Or when they have to worry what happens to the German relative of somebody who has been defined as Jewish. Or when they have to worry and get the information about the labor supply when that labor supply happened to be Jewish and was incarcerated in the ghetto. So in every case the problem solving is addressed to the

consequences of measures being taken which have adverse effects for the German war economy or for the German society and they must protect the economy and they must protect the society as much as possible. That to the ninth degree. That completely as much as possible.

u.49
Qu: I agree with every word you said, but it is very very difficult to think clearly this bureaucratic, administrative procedure because in one way it is perfectly true that it is Germans who say there ^{is} a hole who was involved with the process of the destruction of the Jews; but in another way one thinks like this one has the feeling that the machinery is working completely alone...and that nobody is responsible. You have the two things together, I think they are ^{two} together... but I think we should go a little bit further

Re: Well, when you say that it appears as if no one is responsible, you are touching upon the problem of initiative within the administrative machine. It sounds strange to say but in a democratic country where the president and legislature and the supreme court each branch checking the work of the other, responsibility can be defined. With the Nazi Germany on the other hand, we see those four major hierarchies, those conglomerates if we may call them that -- the civil service, the ^{Army} industry and the Party each taking certain responsibilities of its own, pushing ahead in its sect. Sometimes agreements have to be made so that one is not going to get into the way of the other. But it is essentially true that the entire system rests upon the initiatives, most especially of experts -- people who recognize the problem when it comes up and take timely action to solve it. And these experts act not because they

have received an order nor even because there is a law directing them to do certain things, but because they recognize that now the time has come to take care of a particular problem. And so they are ready -- they are ready when the time comes.

Qu: Even if they are not ideologically connected...

Re: No...

Qu: They don't need to be members of the Nazi Party?

Re: No, of course not.

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Chapter 10, Hilberg 50

Re: Most certainly, they did not have to belong to the Nazi Party and in many cases they did belong only nominally, paying their dues but having really nothing to do with the Party structure as such. The Nazi Party was the most recent manifestation of major organized activity on the scene -- it was the last of the four major blocks of hierarchists that came and it found itself with not all that much to do -- it delegated itself the task of , a rather vague term which denoted formulation of the mood, of the of the people. Of course there were Party bureaucrats. Of course they preoccupied themselves with such questions of heredity and the like. But in the end, except within certain regions and occupied territory, Partymen were left out. The main task was entrusted to those who were producing goods or services, that is to say industry and banks and financial institutions, or to the time-honored ministerial bureaucracy which was familiar with and knowledgeable about various problems which had to be solved. Or, of course since it was war to the armed services. And this is where the action was. Your Party, to be

sure, came into the picture because when all is said and done the SS, in particular, started out as a party formation. But even in the SS, the budget of the Reich had to be engaged. The Party could not through dues collected from its members support such a vast organization. Even here, the Finance Ministry, the Interior Ministry, the Armed Forces became enmeshed with and amalgamated with the SS. And from that standpoint, one cannot speak of an ideological or Party impetus, let alone a party monopoly in any kind of drastic action.

Qu: This means that you would say that it was a self-working machinery?

Re: I would say that inasmuch as we do not find in Nazi Germany a legislature that made the laws, inasmuch as there really was no constitution, the bureaucracy as a whole was a self-regulating mechanism. When they moved ahead too far in a particular area of activity they had to come into agreement with others who would hold them back. But other than that, you see, the basic procedure was to forge ahead, to make agreements, to set out tasks and to solve problems step by step.

Qu: Now can we talk about

Re: *IG Farben* is a typical example of a rather major component in one of these hierarchies, namely

is of course one single company that controlled up to 80 percent of all production of chemicals. It was involved in synthetic rubber, it was involved in pharmaceuticals and in film, it was involved in nitrogen-based industries. In short, a very large enterprise with some fifty different plants. We find in at least three manifestations

of the destruction of the Jews. Already early on in the 1930's, they are involved in Arianizations and the acquisition of say the _____, which was a subsidiary of the _____ in Vienna.

Qu: Jewish?

Re: Jewish enterprise. Again, when the German armies move into Poland, _____ people survey the Polish chemical scene. There isn't very much doing there but they are interested in acquisitions of any Jewish firms. More importantly, _____ is an employer of Jewish labor. It is, after all, the one company that builds its own camp -- as it were within Auschwitz -- and employs tens of thousands of slave laborers in that particular area. And, finally, _____ is in some control through a subsidiary of the production of the synide gas, hydrogen synide, which is being used to kill the Jews in Auschwitz. So here you see a single company which is involved in three different stages with the destruction of the Jews, which is to say a whole lot of people, in different aspects of _____ management in different localities and in different positions. And yet they also in every case make their contribution to the final solution in one way or another. Even _____, even a company does that. So in this sense, you see, you can see in individual companies, and you can see in the military, and you can see in the ministerial bureaucracy, you can see centrally and on the local level, the participation of every office which has some contribution to make.

Qu: But they have been huge in Auschwitz?

Re: It certainly did. It had a rather large operation within Auschqitz. It employed tens of thousands of slave

laborers, it paid the wages to the SS, it had it's, as so many companies incidentally in occupied Europe had their own, guard forces -- the , and it was of course singularly responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of people as well. In that...

Qu: It was a huge concern, a huge industry concern.

Re: Yes. I would say one reason, you see, that is conspicuous is that in the first place it is a very large enterprise and, secondly, they happen to be in Auschwitz. Not every company was in Auschwitz, of course. They happen to be in Auschwitz. There were any number of companies that of course employed...

Qu: Wait a minute. They decided to build a factory in Auschwitz.

Re: They decided to build it because, you see, in Auschwitz there was a concerted effort by the SS to attract industry to the area -- to make use of the heavy inmate population -- which was not only Jewish -- so that profit could be made. The SS would be paid for each employed Jew. The Jews weren't paid actually. And the SS was trying to balance it's books a little bit by having that industry right there. The SS also wanted to appear as a contributor to the war effort and becoming the host of industry it could do so. Now

, in turn, by sending it's engineers, and by sending it's personnel and by making it's investment to Auschwitz, took full advantage of this fact. And may I say it was in Auschwitz with a plant employing labor, it was in Auschwitz with the pharmaceuticals which were used in medical experiments, and it was in Auschwitz with the gas. So here is , you see, in a rather ubiquitous

, you mean?

Re: With the hydrogen cyanide which was a special product, you see, because it had -- it was a solid in cannisters. It would be placed into the gas chamber. It would sublime. It would go from the solid state to the gaseous stage without going through a liquid state. And that was the special property of this particular gas. And may I say even this, you see, shows how technology is involved in the destruction of the Jews. Not only is the gas a special product, but the filter that has to be used in the gas mask by the person administering the gas has to be a special filter. In other words, even here you see the repercussion for every measure requiring special attention. And, once again, chemicals are involved. So, we find in whichever way we examine the situation and whichever vantage point we look at it, indeed, a very large organization which, incidentally, bolsts eminent scientists as well as provident managers and financiers and is, therefore, not readily identified as rift-raft, low class of some sort, involved in this action. And there is a trial on record of personnel at Nürnberg, which reflects

Qu: (Both speak at same time -- not clear, but followed by) They were...the directors appointed to lead the factory in the Auschwitz...this means...this means that they knew that they were using slave labor.

Re: But of course. Of course. And you see the normal

Qu: You think everything about the ^{extermination} ~~excaleration~~?

Re: The normalcy of these careers is, I think, illustrated when I happen to look up in , which is the Who's Who of Germany, and in the postwar Who's Who the name

of , who was an farm official in Auschwitz in charge of Division II -- the chemicals. And he is now written up in the "Who's Who of Germany today. In the late 1960's, for example, as a person simply as a Ph.D., he is a scientist, he is a member of the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors of Industry, , and he was born in 1904, he was educated in and he has a hobby -- hunting.

Qu: Hunting?

Re: Hunting. Well, everybody has to have a hobby.

Hans , the man is perhaps responsible for the first anti-Jewish degree has a number of hobbies as a hobby and has a hobby -- the Talleyrand, music, golf.

Qu: This is a Who's Who of today?

Re: Why of course it is. And this is..

Qu: And they don't say a word about the...

Re: About Auschwitz?

Qu: Yes.

Re: Well, would you expect them to?

Qu: Well, ...

Re: Of course not. No, I have gone through the Who's Who and I am sure this is a statement that is easily pursued, if not with great pleasure, to find any reference to the war-time careers. There is a gap -- the familiar gap. But I emphasize this description because I want you to realize how absolutely normal, how absolutely normal this career

pattern is. And the fact that at one point between 1943 and 1945 this particular individual is in Auschwitz, is treated no differently than if at one point in his career that he had been in Dusseldorf, Munheim or some other place.

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1946 The presence of IG Farben in Auschwitz is an example of industry involvement in the very center of the destructive operation. In fact, of course, the SS was attracting industry to it's camp in order that it might make a profit from the labor. And as early as the beginning of 1941, Otto [redacted], who was an official of [redacted] was visiting in Auschwitz and discussing the problem of establishing a plant there. Finally that plant was built and it became so large that one part of Auschwitz became in essence IG Auschwitz. As a matter of fact, there were two plants. One was the actinic acid and the other was the synthetic rubber plant. Overall operations in the hands of a man called Duffet. Now the synthetic rubber plant -- the so-called bunna plant, was in the hands of Dr. [redacted]. And the plant itself, the entire investment I should say, was quite large considering that some 700,000,000 Reichmarks were expended in it's construction and operation. The number of inmates that passed through it were in the vicinity of 35,000. The estimates are on the part of those who left this enterprise -- that up to 25,000 may have died. And this is one complex alone. There were also, I might add, two coal mines being operated by IG F. in the vicinity which was a favorite way of doing business -- namely having independent coal mines for the support of industrial operations. And the death rate in the coal mines amongst the Jewish

inmates was extraordinarily high. The life expectancy was extraordinarily low. IG did add it's so-called bunna soup to the Jewish diet but clearly that bit of soup didn't keep all that many people alive. We know from statements made by Hess, Commander of Auschwitz, that relations between the SS command and the IG management was rather cordial. That Hess had invited IG managers to his home, included. And we also know that the operation lasted long enough for a certain social bonds to have formed and for knowledge to have to have sunk in -- that here was IG inside every center of the Nazi death machine. And they did feel sufficiently at home there to continue and they did feel relations were cordial enough so that they could speak of the arrangement as having paid dividends in a business sense, in a political sense to their company.

Qu: They knew of course everything about extermination, about...

Re: They couldn't help knowing it because one inmate even overheard a visiting team of directors remark about some slowness of work and indicated that if some of the inmates would not be working faster, they could die in the gas chambers. It would appear that right on the scene even the wording of such remarks was unconcealed and open. This is to say that the visiting team were of pretty high dignitaries were obviously fully aware of what was going on.

Qu: But did they see the ^{really} queue??

Re: Well in the affidavit that we have, which was made by one of the survivors, they simply said -- one quote; (quoted in German) and another quote (again in German). And this

is essentially "if they can't work any harder, then let them perish in the gas chamber."

Qu: (In German)

Re: is a Jewish pig -- this Jewish pig could work a little harder. This Jewish pig could work a little harder. Now the sheer tempo and the sheer language which we see in IG Auschwitz does suggest that the atmosphere and environment of the concentration camp IG Auschwitz could behave just like the SS did. And that I think is not, is not insignificant.

Qu: Does Eichmann in the Who's Who which is published today -- the two years that Eichmann spent in Auschwitz as director of the bunna plant simply appear?

Re: Erased.

Qu: Erased?

Re: As in all the descriptions that form the preparatorious right for inclusion in the German Who's Who -- the time that was spent in the war is just a blank page and simply omitted. So that presence in Auschwitz is not mentioned.

Qu: What do you think of German today -- of the Germany of today?

Re: Of course the Germany of today has a generation born after the completion of these events. I suspect that perhaps the most important division in Germany is not the division between East Germany and West Germany, prominent as it is; but at this moment it is the division between an older generation and another, which is younger. I cannot imagine full and free conversation between these two generations and this

means people who are in their twenties, who are in their thirties cannot converse with their own father about some of the most crucial events that took place in their father's life, cannot get free and full-flowing information, cannot find out what it is that transpired in the psyche of their parents. And this must make for an enormous gulf between two generations -- one which makes it necessary almost for Germany to live in the present, to be a country without at least a recent past where everything is being attempted to conjure up a more distant past which is believed to be more compatible with the present. There is, in that sense a one dimensional Germany. At least, as far as I can see in my occasional visits which are limited to my research. And it is the most prominent feature that I can see there.

Qu: Do they recognize this recent past -- I mean as not the one as part of their own history?

Re: I think they do because in my conversations with some new German bureaucrats in their thirties, I have even encountered the phenomena of somebody introducing himself to me by age, making sure that I understood that he was born in 1938 or that he was not older than 38 years or something of this kind. And in one particularly sharp discussion I had with a member of the German Customs Administration and a chance to make some remarks which indicated my familiarity with Germany of old, his reply was (In German) "That was another generation." And one cannot be more graphic than that in the Germany of today.

HILBERG 040

HILBERG: About 10 weeks before the deportations began in the Warsaw ghetto, German agencies were filming life in the Jewish quarter with a view to propagandising for their own purposes... with some description that would not be flattering to the Jewish victims. The Chairman of the Jewish Council in the ghetto, Adam Czerniakow, recorded this filming in daily entries in his diary. I shall now read some excerpts from the translation prepared by Professor Stanislaw Staron from the original Polish manuscript.

'May 12th 1942. In the morning, at the Community. Avril (I will interpolate this as an SS sergeant) arrived with the film makers and announced that they would shoot a scene at the ritual baths on Dzielna Street. They need 20 orthodox Jews with earlocks, and 20 middle-class women from the higher strata.' (The higher strata, because of course the lower-class women would have been so starved as not to fit the purpose of the German propagandists.) I go on with the diary: 'In addition, a demonstration of circumcision. This is to be arranged on the orders of Dr Milejkowski.' (Dr Milejkowski was in charge of health services in the ghetto.) 'Since the actor weighs 4.4 pounds, that is to say 2 kilograms, there is a danger that he may not last that long.'

'May 13th 1942. Yesterday they were shooting a scene at the ritual baths. We had to replace the women originally assigned -

one of them refused to undress. They insisted that the circumcision be performed in a private apartment instead of a hospital. I brought up the matter of the film-making with Brandt' (that is SS Untersturmführer Brandt, of the Gestapo), 'and the Commissar.' (That is Heinz Auerswald, in charge of the ghetto.) 'I posed a question to them as to why our schools, etc. were not being filmed.'

'May 14th 1942. 57° F. In the morning, at the Community. A children's playground is taking shape in front of the Community building at Grybowska St. I am planning several such playgrounds in different parts of the ghetto. I would like music once a week at the playground on Grybowska St. At 4 o'clock on my return home I found uniformed film-makers, etc. Romcia is ill in bed.' (Romcia is a friend of the family) 'Niunia', (his wife) 'as usual of late, is not feeling well. According to the papers an offensive on Kerch has started. 40 000 Russians were taken prisoner.' (This of course was the German spring offensive in the Crimea.)

'May 15th 1942. 57° F. In the morning, at the Community. At 8.30 a.m. I am waiting at home for the film crew. I requested that a couple be engaged to be actors. The movie men arrived at 8.45 and were shooting until 12.30. They placed a sign on the door with something written on it. 2 women and a male star were brought to the apartment, then an old Jew. They started shooting.

'The city is full of rumours about deportation. Tens of thousands

are being mentioned. Work as usual under such conditions is indeed worthy of admiration, and yet we are doing it every day. Tears will not help us. I must repeat Dickens' words once more: 'You cannot wind your watch with your tears.' Haendel, (an official of the Jewish labour department) 'turned up about Lejkin's 3-stars.' (Lejkin was placed in charge of the Jewish police in the ghetto, and 3 stars were next to 4, the highest rank.) 'The authorities decided to promote him. In the afternoon the film-makers were busy in the bedroom of Zabłudowski's neighbours'. (Zabłudowski was another Community official) 'They brought with them a woman, who was seen applying lipstick in front of a mirror. They were full of admiration for a little statuette of Confucius and a piece of sculpture, 'Motherhood', by Ostrzega at my apartment. One of them asked whether my Watteau on the wall was an original. I replied that the original was in the Berlin museum, and my painting was a poor copy.

'I am seeing Auerswald tomorrow about sanitation week, the settling of accounts with the municipality and the possible taking-over by the Council of the registration offices, which until now were staffed by Polish functionaries. It was Auerswald's idea that we do the latter. Delingowski, Kulski's deputy, (Kulski the Polish mayor of the city) 'insists that he will not surrender these offices unless he receives such an order from the Stadthauptmann' (that is Leist, the overall commander of all of Warsaw, and a German). 'In the meantime the offices

are closed, since our staff received no passes.

'During the movie-making an old Jew with a vandyke beard was seized in the street. He sat in my apartment for hours, but his photographic qualities were not utilised. I can imagine what happened when he returned home and tried to tell his wife that he had earned nothing, waiting for 3 hours to be a star. I wonder whether I will ever meet you, my professional colleague. Didn't we miss our destiny? Anyway, when he happens to watch a movie some time he will remark sneeringly, 'As though I couldn't do it myself'.

'May 16th 1942. In the morning, with Auerswald. I reported on yesterday's developments. In the end I casually mentioned the Order Service orchestra' (Order Service is the Jewish police) 'and asked permission for it to play out of doors. I would like the band to play in the children's playgrounds we are planning
'May 19th. In the morning, at the Community.

The film-makers came to a Jewish restaurant. They ordered that food be served. Chance customers devoured everything with an enormous appetite - several thousand zlotys worth. Somebody telephoned the Council that the Community should foot the bill for the alleged costs.

Czerwinski's funeral took place at 4 p.m. It was filmed. The cemetery was visited by a provincial 'gouverneur'. Firszt(?) (the Community's chief of the economic division) served as guide. On their way home the motorcade stopped at the above-mentioned restaurant. The gouverneur was astonished at the food

he found there. The movie people ordered a party to be arranged tomorrow in a private apartment. The ladies are to wear evening dresses.

'June 14th 1942. Cloudy. Today is Sunday. I am not sure whether the orchestra could perform in the playground. It turned out that it did, despite the light rain. I issued instructions for the children from the precinct detention room organised by the Order Service to be brought to the playground. They are living skeletons from the ranks of the street beggars. Some of them came to my office. They talked with me like grown-ups, those 8-year-old citizens. I am ashamed to admit it, but I wept as I have not wept for a long time. I gave a chocolate bar to each of them. They all received soup as well. Damned be those of us who have enough to eat and drink and forget about these children.'

(Instructions from Mr Lanzmann)

H. 'May 12 th 1942...'

C.L. No, just the sentence.

H. 'This is to be arranged on orders by Dr Milejkowski. Since the actor weighs 4.4 pounds (2 kilograms) there is a danger that may not last that long'.

HILBERG 041

H. 'June 14th 1942' (just one month before Czerniakow's death) -
 'Cloudy. Today is Sunday. I am not sure whether the orchestra could perform in the playground. It turned out that it did play in spite of the light rain. I issued instructions for the children from the precinct detention room...' (that is where children were kept after they had been over the law, to keep them from doing it again and to give them a meal and shelter).
 'organised by the Order Service to be brought to the playground. They are living skeletons from the ranks of the street beggars. Some of them came to my office; they talked with me like grown-ups, those 8-year-old citizens. I am ashamed to admit it, but I wept as I have not wept for a long time. I gave a chocolate bar to each of them. They all received soup as well. Damned be those of us who have enough to eat and drink and forget about these children'.

HILBERG 042

H. Within the Lodz ghetto there was a group of people who kept a kind of daily newspaper, but not for public consumption, about events that took place there. They noted down, amongst other things, the prices of products. I will now read two very small excerpts from this very long chronicle.
 'September 20th 1942, under the heading 'Brotpreis im freien

H. Le 20 septembre 1942, sous la rubrique: "Le prix du pain au marché libre" et autre prix, on parle de la saccharine:

"Le prix de la saccharine s'élève à 1 Mark pour 8 unités. On peut donc conclure que désormais, une semaine après les tristes événements, la situation dans le ghetto est redevenue plus calme et stable, la saccharine réagissant comme premier instrument de mesure à toutes les spéculations et à toutes les situations sous la forme d'une augmentation immédiate de son prix. C'est ainsi que pendant les 'jours de la terreur' ce prix s'éleva jusqu'à 1 Mark pour 4 unités."

Et ensuite, le 23 septembre 1942, sous la rubrique:

'L'état des prix':

"La saccharine, c'est-à-dire le baromètre des tendances, se vendait hier à 1 Mark pour 9 unités".

Handel' and other prices, it comes to saccharin.

'Saccharin ist gegenwertig 8 Stück für 1 Mark erhältlich.

Heraus ist zu ersehen, dass sich die Situation im Ghetto eine Woche nach den traurigen Ereignissen wieder beruhigt und stabilisiert hat, da Saccharin als erster Gradmesser auf jede Situation und Spekulation reagiert und sofort im Preise steigt. So war es während der Schreckenstage auf 4 Stück pro Mark gestiegen.'

Again, on September 23rd 1942, under the heading of 'Preislage

'Saccharin, das Tendenzbarometer, stand gestern auf 9 Stück für 1 Mark'.

HILBERG 043

- H. 'Schreckenstage' refers to a week from 5th to 12th September, when there was a 'Gehsperre' - people were not allowed out in the streets - and 'Evakuierung' (deportation) of many people from the ghetto.

HILBERG 045

- C.L. I agree with every word you say, but what is striking - and maybe it is a question of character, of Kásztner and Czerniakow - in the report Kásztner doesn't express many doubts, he is rather proud of what he did. He has a good conscience.

- H. He has a good image of himself, yes. One does have the feeling,

reading K~~as~~stner, that he had a high opinion of his own abilities. The report is constructed this way. But you see, again we are dealing with a particular juncture of events and we have to recognise that those who doubted their own ability to deal with such a situation were hardly better at the job than those who may have exaggerated their own capacities. It is seldom that you find the right middle. And certainly K~~as~~stner, although he overestimates what he can do, as does Romkowski^(?), of course, as do many others - Marmelstein(?) - in my opinion at least K~~as~~stner comes out better than the others who overestimated themselves, which is not to say much. But he had some reason. He had some reason for thinking of himself as he did, because he was comparing himself with very weak people, especially in Budapest: the people of the Council, the people who were sitting there wondering what Waldsee was.

C.L. Waldsee was the fake name of Auschwitz.

H. That's right. We know that after the first transports went out, and the Germans instructed the victims to write postcards home and address them from Waldsee - the crudest possible deception - it took a while even for Hilpenfreu(?) to get to see through this when he noticed that on one of the cards was the erased word 'Auschwitz' - erased, that is, by the writer, the Jewish victim, - and then he knew that the destination indeed was Auschwitz. But why is it that he didn't assume this from the very beginning when the transports were leaving? Every day counted, every hour.

C.L. Yes, that's the point.

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H. You see, you have people that are trying to find confirmation of everything, trying to make absolutely sure, but whenever Councils were trying to make absolutely sure, they in the meantime made the decisions that were sending the victims to their deaths. So here you have another problem, and another paradox if you like: why is it that the Councils would assume that it was appropriate to send out notifications to deportees or to send out police to gather them, when they were not certain of the destination? Why is it that, not knowing where the transports went, they were willing to act in compliance with German orders? That's the real problem. It's not the problem of 'Did they exactly know or didn't they exactly know?' It is why they acted without firm knowledge of the ultimate destination of the deportees. And whenever they put the burden of proof somehow on the accidental discovery of facts, they were much too late, for by the time they had confirmation many, or even most of the people in their care had been deported. That's the crux of it. It's not what you do when you have confirmed facts, it's what you do before you have them. K szner made sure that he had his facts very early, and if they were not entirely confirmed, he nevertheless assumed that they pointed in only one direction. In that respect he was right.

cc ?
(inconnu): I didn't understand this.

H. It's a difficult point to understand, because it is a situation in which a lot of members of a lot of Councils are called upon to take certain actions by the Germans, which lead to the

deportation and ultimate death of the ghetto inhabitants; or the Jewish Community members. The question is: What do you do if there is no certainty as to the ultimate destination of the transport that is going out? You don't know where this transport is going; what do you do? Are you going to comply with German orders until you are convinced that the deportees are going to their deaths, or are you going to refuse to comply with these orders until you are convinced that they are safe? That's the question.

C.L. But you say that K sztner had no doubts...

H. K sztner had no doubts. But remember that there are people in Budapest at that very time, and I'm now speaking of 1944, who even though they already had enough information about the fate of the Jews of Europe, still had doubts as to what would be the fate of the Hungarian Jews.

C.L. But can one call them doubts? Or hopes?

H. Well, they had hopes. They doubted the conclusion, shall we say, that in Hungary the same thing would happen that had happened everywhere else. They doubted that this was inevitable, and of course they doubted it because they had hope.

C.L. But I think this was the case everywhere.

H. Of course it was.

C.L. That they had any hopes at all is the reason why it is so difficult to grasp.

H. Of course. But you notice also that Jewish resistance organizations in Eastern Poland or Lithuania - in the Kaunas area or

the Bialystok area, and in Warsaw itself - always drafted their proclamations to the Jewish people in such a way as to say 'Do not believe what you are told! Do not believe that you are being sent out to a farm somewhere in the Ukraine.' And this is the constant refrain of a number of these proclamations - it's this single message: 'do not trust the promises, do not believe what you are told, do not assume that because you have some hope, that is based on any rational expectation.' And you see that's the content of a number of such appeals that were actually written in 1942 and early 1943, which we have - we have the pieces of paper that were written by these resistance organisations. Now why did they have to say 'don't assume you are going somewhere where you are going to be safe'? Because people did believe it, people wanted to believe it.

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